

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claims are 1 to 9.

The above amendment to claim 1 is responsive to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The Examiner's suggestion has been adopted.

The Official Action rejects claims 1 to 9 as being anticipated by Mark (U.S. 4,730,035), col. 2 to 5, example 1 and claim 1 or Fezza et al. (U.S. 5,703,203) abstract, col. 2 to 4 and examples.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention relates to the continuous drying of gelled and washed polymers containing N or amino, ammonium or spirobicyclic ammonium groups, obtained by polymerization, crosslinkage and optionally alkylation in a fluidized bed.

The polymer gel, which can have up to approximately 90% of bound water, is introduced continuously into the fluidized bed dryer, whereupon owing to the gaseous medium injected, loosening of the moist product and then the formation of a constant fluidized bed occurs and finally sufficient dried polymer gel, which has a water content of 2 to 5%, is removed continuously from the fluidized bed dryer such that a constant amount of fluidized bed remains in the dryer.

Mark describes the drying of halogenated polyolefin resins, which have a water content of about 15 to 60 % by weight.

Before drying (for industrial scale) the moist resins have to be admixed with an anti-agglomeration additive.

If drying is done continuously according to Mark, this is done in a two or three step process.

In the first step the water content is lowered to 5 to 50%, in the second step to 3 to 30% and in the third step to 0.05-4%.

Thus, there are several essential differences between the process according to Mark and that presently claimed.

Firstly, different polymers with different water content are dried.

Secondly, Mark teaches the addition of an anti- agglomeration additive before drying, whereas the present invention does not add such an additive and thirdly Mark teaches a multi-step process for continuously drying, whereas the present application uses a one step process.

Thus, Mark cannot anticipate the present invention.

Fezza describes a process for the removal of oligomers from crystalline olefin polymers. Fezza does not describe a drying process. Dry and crystalline olefin polymers are fed to the apparatus and are heated to a temperature where the oligomers evaporate. Further, again, totally different polymers are used in Fezza and the present application.

Thus, Fezza also cannot anticipate the present invention.

Claim 8 is rejected as being unpatentable over Mark U.S. 4,730,035) or Fezza (U.S. 5,703,203) in view of Wirsching (U.S. 4,423,016).

This rejection is also respectfully traversed.

The rejection states that the reference discloses a process prepared from the same components as claimed by Applicants except for the particular apparatus.

As discussed above, neither Mark nor Fezza discloses or suggests the presently claimed process.

Further the rejection states that Wirsching discloses a process using a fluidized bed for drying a polymer product.

This is not the case because Wirsching describes the drying of gypsum, which is not a polymer.

For the foregoing reasons, it is apparent that the rejections on prior art are untenable and should be withdrawn.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.


If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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